



DORCAS:



A
TRUE PATTERNNE

of a goodly life, and good end.

WITH
A PITHY EXHORTATION
to the practice of faith and good works.

In a Sermon preached at Totnes in Devon, January 14. 1630

At the Funerall of Mrs. Mary Bab, Widow.

By THOMAS SALTERN, sometimes Lecturer there; And
Preacher of the Word at Bradford.

And now published, at the request of sundry godly persons.

PROV. 31. 30.

*Favour is deceitfull, and beauty is vaine, but a woman that feareth the Lord
shall be praised.*

LONDON,

Printed by M. F. for Roger Iackson, and are to bee sold at his
Shop neere the Conduit in Fleetstreet.

1631.

D O R C A S

A

TRAVE PATTERN

of a goodly life, and good end.

WITH

A PITHY EXHORTATION

to the practice of faith and good works.

The sermon preached at Taverham Down, January 14. 1630.

By the Reverend Mr. Mary Dib, Vicar.

By Thomas SALTER, Somersetshire Justice.

Preached at the Word in 1630.

As now published, in the printed of many goodly editions.

Printed, 21. 30.

Printed in the City, and bound in a cover, for a woman's use, for the use of the Lord.

LONDON.

Printed by W. F. for Roger Jackson, and are to be sold at his Shop next the Conduit in Fleet-street.

1631.

DORCAS.

A PATTERN OF

a godly life, and good end.

Act. 9. vers. 36, 37.

Now there was at Ioppa a certaine Disciple, named Tabitha, which by interpretation is called Dorcas : This woman was full of good workes, and almes-deeds which shee did.

And it came to passe in those dayes that she was sicke, and dyed.



His whole Chapter may well be diuided into two parts: the one concerning Saint *Paul*, the other touching Saint *Peter* : the one the Apostle of the *Gentiles*, the other of the *Jews*. The ones wonderfull conuersion, the others miraculous operation : the conuersion of the one from a Wolfe into a Lambe, from a Beare into a Sheep, from plai-

ing the Lyon of the Tribe of *Beniamin*, into following the Lyon of the Tribe of *Iudah* : from *Saul* into *Paul* : from a persecutor, into a Preacher of Christianity. The others miraculous operation in healing a sicke man at *Lydda*, in raising a dead Wo-

more is *Tabbitha*: both weaker in sound, and the latter more, by how much more harder it is to give life to one that is dead, then to restore health to one that is alive. In this latter story, besides many other circumstances that may be noted, I observe vnto you these three: First, the person raised to life, *Tabitha*, which by interpretation is called *Dorcas*. Secondly, the instrument which God vsed in the raising of her, viz. *Saint Peter*. Thirdly, the effect of the miracle, which v. 43. is intimated to bee twofold, *sams* brought to the eares, and faith bred in the hearts of many people; for it was knowne throughout all Ioppa, and many beloued in it. *Lord*. I will speake onely of the person raised, for my text stretcheth it selfe no further, concerning whom the story records three things, her life, her death, her being raised againe. Of the third point nothing at all at this time, for it cometh not within the bounds and limits of my text: only of the two former, her life, and death; whereof you haue a Sermon in print so intituled, *The Life and Death of Dorcas*; to which I will refer you for many good notes; which, because there so fully handled, by me shall be omitted.

In speaking of her life I will intreat of two things, first, of her name, *Tabitha*, by interpretation *Dorcas*: and secondly, of her profession, her profession in the forme of it, *shee was a Disciple*, and her profession in the fruit of it, *she was full of good workes and almes, which shee did*. In intreating of her death, I will speake of two things, the fore-runner of her death, which was her sicknesse, and the euene of her sicknesse, which was her death.

The first thing then to be spoken of is her name, *Tabitha*, and that is *Dorcas*, which names doe signifie a Roe or a Bucke, and are both of them deriued from such rootes in their severall languages, as doe beoken to see. I will say nothing of that observation that might here bee made, how that God knoweth his children by name, as he said to *Moses*, *Exod. 33. 17. Thou hast founde grace in my sight, and I know thee by name*: to shew that particular and peculiar knowledge of approbation, whereby God knoweth the elect aboue others; nor any thing of the discret choice that should be vsed in the naming of children; in which point, as I commend not the nicety of some, who like no other names, but such as haue their good significacion in holy Scripture,

cure, so I much rather condemne their absurd folly, who out of wit as they thinke, I am sure without any dramme of discretion, giue ridiculous and vnsensibly names to the children they come to be sureties for. The note I doe gather out of her name, and I will but touch vpon it, is in a word this, as her name was, so was she: *Tabitha*, or *Dorcas* was her name, and she was, and wee ought to bee cleare-sighted, and with our eyes open, to the things that concerne our soules health. In things of the world we are Eagles, but beetles and moles in diuine matters: curious inquisitors into the liues of other, carelesse neglecters of our owne estates, and of what belongs to our Christian duties; whereas if we would search the Scriptures as wee are commanded, we should in them be taught what the objects are, which God would haue vs chiefly to fixe the eyes of our cares and endeavors on. See that you keepe my Sabbaths, *Exod. 31.* See (said old *Tobias* to his Sonne) that thou neuer doe that to any man, which thou wouldest not that another should doe to thee. Why seest thou the mote in thy brothers eye, and dost not see the beame in thine owne eye, *Mat. 7.* See that no man deceiue you; See and take heed how you beare; See that you walke circumspectly, not as fooles, but as wise, *Ephes. 5. 15.* See that none recompence euill for euill vnto any man, *1 Thes. 5. 15.* And in many other places of holy Scripture we are taught, that if we wil be true *Dorcas*es, indeed, we must cast our eyes, the eyes of our affections, not on things below, but on the things that are above, *Collos. 3. 2.* Therefore did *Dauid* pray vnto God, saying, Turne away mine eyes that they behold not vanity. But I haue seene (saith *Salomon*) and considered all the workes that are done vnder the Sun, and behold, all is vanity and vexation of spirit, *Eccl. 1. 14.*

The next thing to be spoken of in the life of this *Dorcas*, is her profession, which was not in shew onely, and for formalities sake, but in deed, and in truth: She was a Disciple, and full of good workes & almes which she did. A disciple in professio, & in practice too, a disciple in confession and conuersation too; the one by her faith, and the other by her workes, the one is as the roote, the other as the fruit of Christian profession. They met together in her, and must in all that will be true disciples: *Without faith it is impossible to please God, Heb. 11. 6. and without holiness,*

impossible to see Gail, Heb. 12. 14. Faith without workes is dead, and workes without faith, are sinnes, not in the substance, and because they are done; but in a maine circumstance, because done without faith.

Morall honesty, without profession of the true faith, is blind, and wanteth an eye to direct it; and profession, without practice, on the other side, is lame, and wants a foot to cary it in the way to heaven. Therefore saith Saint Paul, *I beseech you that you walke worthy of the vocation wherewith you are called.* Ephes. 4. 1. And, *let your conversation be as becometh the Gospel of Christ.* Phi. 1. 27. that the Gospell of Christ, the profession of Christianity, the name of disciples, the truth of God bee not ill spoken of, as the Apostle telleth the *Jewes*, saying, *The name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles through you.* Rom. 2. 24. and willett Titus to teach all degrees so to behaue themselves, *that the word of God be not blasphemed.* Tit. 2. 5. for if we play the foolish painters part, and *humani capiti cervicem adiungere equinum*, put a mans head on an horses necke; looke like disciples, and liue like Devils, confesse God in our mouthes, and deny him in our workes; shall it not be said of vs in scorne and derision, as it was of the *Jewes* by the Heathen, *Ezek. 36. 20. These are the people of the Lord,* these are the Protestants of our times, these are the Professors of our dayes, these are they that call themselves disciples, and are not; *But as many as walke according to this rule, peace be on them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of God.* Gal. 6. 16.

O beloved, when the doctrines and deeds, the words and workes, the profession and practice of Christians, of Disciples, of Professors, shall not agree together, but be at oddes and at iarre with one another, consider and thinke on it in the feare of God, what advantage you giue to any the enemies of God and his Truth, of Christ and his Religion, of goodnesse and good men; to speake euill of your God; to lay a blemish on your Religion, to condemne your profession, because they will not easily bee made to thinke that there can be any good root or foundation there, where they see no better fruit, so bad a building. This holinesse of life; (I mean not that alone which the Philosophers speake of, and we call it morall honesty, which yet commends vs vnto the world; is good in it selfe, is necessary to saluation,

but

but is not sufficient) when it is the fruit and effect of a lively faith in Christ Iesus, and a right affection to Godward, is a token and testimony of our vnion with Christ, of our state in grace, of our being as we would bee taken for, true disciples indeed: a testimony I say, and a token, not to our owne consciences only, but to other mens hearts also; whereas to professe well, and liue ill, or to make a shift to liue morally ciuill, and not care of what profession we be, is to beare false witnesse against God, whose seruants we boast our selues, and would be taken for, and yet haue not on his liuery: Gods liuery is a good life, and the badge or cognizance thereof, is a right profession; this ioynly is it which should, this is it which doth, this is it which will declare, when words shall proue but winde, and shewes shall bee but shadowes, whose seruants we are in deed. Wee all desire, and are glad to bee accounted good Christians, honest men, true professors, the children of God, faithfull brethren, and the like; but let vs strue to be what we desire to be accounted; godly names will neuer iustifie godlesse men, *nay, pius nomen est ueritas impij*, faith *Saluianus*, wee are but openly mockt and vpbraided, secretly accused and conuicted, when we are honoured with names and titles, whereto our liues and manners are not futable. Therefore try your selues, beloved, what measure of righteousness is in you, let not the names of honest men, and good Christians, and such other, puffe any of you vp; try and examine your owne hearts, with what loue you heare the word, with what care you are fitted to doe thereafter, what conscience you make of sinne, what ioy you conceiue in the workes of righteousness, what griefe you feelee when your frailty doth make you to fall; thus try, and so like or dislike of your selues. Certainly a Christian, though he cannot be *sine peccato & culpa*, without sinne; yet he should labour to be *sine crimine & querela*, without being scandalous and offensive. No man shall enter be able to say absolutely as Christ did, *Iohn 8. 46. Which of you can conuince me of sin?* for in many things we offend all, *Iam. 3. 2.* And, if we say that wee haue no sinne, we deceiue our selues, and the truth is not in vs, *1 Iohn 1. 8.* And therefore wee pray with *David, Psal. 143. 2. Enter not into iudgment with thy seruants:* Yet in respect of men, and of the world, we ought all of vs to labour

bow and endeavor, to strue with might and maine, to bee able to say as *Moses* did to God, *Numb. 16. 25. I haue not taken so much as an Asse from them, neither haue I hurt any of them;* as *Samuel* did to the people, *1 Sam. 12. 3. Behold, here I am, feare recorder of me before the Lord, and before his Anointed, Whose Oxe haue I taken? or whose Asse haue I taken? or whom haue I done wrong to? or whom haue I hurt? &c.* As *Saint Paul* did to the *Corinthians*, *1 Cor. 4. 4. I know nothing by my selfe: So to liue in sincerity of heart, that we may be able to say with Iob, We haue our witness in heauen, and a witness in our owne consciences;* and outwardly to follow such integrity and righteousnesse, as that we dare challenge either common fame to accuse vs, or our very enemies to condemne vs if they can. And in thus doing, wee shall bring glory to God, comfort to our owne consciences, and benefit vnto others. God shall be glorified; and therefore saith *S. Peter*, *Haue your conuersation honest among the Gentiles, that they which speake euill of you as of euill doers, may by your good workes which they shall see, glorifie God in the day of the visitation.* *1 Pet. 2. 12.* Others shall be ashamed hauing nothing concerning you to speake euill of, *Tit. 2. 8.* and by this good shame won vnto the word through the conuersation of the rest; and aboue all, our owne consciences shall receiue that peace and quiet which the world cannot giue, nor the vnderstanding of man comprehend. And so I come to speake more particularly of the fruit of this womans profession, out of those words, *she was full of good workes, and almes which she did.*

In which words the fruit of her profession is commended; from the matter of it, from the measure of it, from the quality, from the quantity of it; the matter or quality twofold, in generall good workes, in speciall almesdeedes; the measure and quantity, in the word *full, full of good workes, and full of almes.* First, *full of good workes.* Now when I speake of good workes, I will not bound and impale them within the too narrow compasse of the workes of mercy onely, and charity towards men; nor doe I thinke my text inforceth me so to doe: neither will I speake in the language of Gentilisme, that knoweth no other good works then those which we call morall vertues; no, the seuerall fruits of faith, the many branches growing out of the tree of holinesse and righteousnesse, the seuerall Commandements of the two

Tables, are not more wide then the name of good works is. What soeuer is commanded in any of those precepts (saith it selfe alone excepted, which is included in the first Commandement, is comprehended vnder the name and title of good workes: euen as the Articles of our Creed doe, the sum of that which a Christian ought to beleue to his soules health.

Let no man therefore thinke it enough for him to bee carefull and zealous in performing the Commandements of the first Table, while those of the second Table are neglected by him, if not by his open or actuall transgression of the letter, yet by too ordinary violating the sense of them, in his truely disobeying vnder an vntrue pretence of greater obedience, by his pride, and malice, and couetousnesse, breach of charity, of Christian, yea of naturall affection, hypocrisie, double-dealing and deceitfulness: (unto which crimes many I feare, that thinke well of themselves, and would be so thought of others, do yet run headlong and doe not heed it) nor on the other side will it serue our turnes to obtaine in some good measure from violating the precepts of the second Table, (which feare or worldly shame, or other temporall respects may make vs carefull in) while wee make no conscience of the Commandements of the first: perning our Religion with the Weathercockes of the time, diuiding our affections betweene God and *Bail*, allowing *Dagon* a roome as well as the Arke, gracing (as wee thinke) our speeches with oathes and blaspheemies, making our selues Gentiles on Gods Sabbaths for feare of being Iewes. God hath ioyned these two tables together, the first he calls the great Commandement (and we make least account of it) and of the second he saith, that it is like vnto it, and no man must, (if he wil be a true Disciple) euer the things which God hath ioyned, they may be distinguished in our booke and learning, they must not bee diuided in our practice and liuing.

Now, workes are then good, when, first, the ground of them is good, and that is the word of God, the touchstone by which we must try, the compasse by which we must direct, the square by which we must frame, and the rule whereby we must order all our actions, if wee will bring them within the compasse of

religious good workes. Secondly, when the roote of them is good, and that is faith, without which, whatsoeuer hath the name of a good worke, hath yet as our Church speakes (art. 13.) seeing not done as God hath willed, the nature of sin in it; and all such things though they appeare specious and beautifull in the eyes of men, yet are (as S. *Austin* speakes) but *efflendida peccata*, they are not gold though they do glister. And thirdly, when the end of them is good, & that is Gods gloiy: therefore sayth our Saviour Christ, *Mat. 5. 16. Let your lights so shine before men that they may see your good works, and glorifie your Father which is in heauen.* And the Apostle, *Whatsoever you doe, do all to the glory of God.* 1 Cor. 10. 31. And from good works thus vnderstood and thus qualified, none are exempted, all haue their peeces of money, all haue their talents giuen them, *Luk. 19.* to some in one measure, and to other some in another, but to all to imploy according to the Law of their Master, and all to giue an account for their vse of them; euery man hath his burthen, and hee must beare it himselte, *Gal. 6. 5.* Works of supererogation are works of superarrogation, and he that wanting righteousnesse himselte hopeth to be saued by another mans, doth but mock himselte as Pope *Symmachus* did when he said, and as the Canonists doe the Pope in saying so too (as it is *dist. 40. c. non nos.*) that, *In Papa si desint bona acquisita per meritum, &c.* If the Pope haue none or little goodnesse of his owne (as it seemeth by this it may bee in that most holy Father himselte) he shall haue enough deriued vnto him from his Predecessor; if none in possession, enough by succession; if little by purchase, enough by inheritance: no, no, the Saints in heauen though they haue Crownes to weare, yet they haue none to spare: And, *God shall reward euery man according to his* (not according to anothers) *workes.* Euery man is a tree, and should be a good tree, whose roote is faith, whose sap is hope, whose branches, the seuerall branches of Gods Commandements, and of euery tree (without exception) that bringeth not forth good fruit, it is said, *Mat. 3. 10. it is cut downe and cast into the fire.* And, upon euery soule of man that doth euill, shall bee tribulation and anguish, *Rom. 2. 9.* Onow, if I would looke about the world for a *Dorcas*, and in the troope of Disciples too, should I not need with the Cynicke Philosopher to

light

light a candle, and yet should not find? nor many. *The fruits of the spirit are love, joy, peace, long suffering, gentleness, goodness, &c.* Gal. 5. 22. These are fruits of faith, these are workes of righteousness. But where are these? And in stead of these, what are the too common fruits of faith? is your swearing and blasphemy a fruit of faith? is your lying and perjury a fruit of faith? and what say you to your riot and drunkenness, to your chambering and wantonness, to covetousness and oppression, to usury and extortion, to strife and contention, to envie and malice in one towards another, and the like to these? If these were the signes of Christian profession, if these were the badges of Christs Disciples, if these were the workes that God did looke for, God might come when he would, hee should finde these things amongst vs, & find vs full of them. O iudge with your selues (B.) is this the way to make your calling and election sure? as S. Peter willethe you: or is it not the way rather to scale vnto your soules the assurance of your condemnation in the day of iudgment? No, no, if you will, as all good Christians ought to doe, strive to attaine to a certainty of your future blessedness, these things ought not to be so among you; the workes of darkness are not the way to heaven, the workes of righteousness are, though no meritorious cause of our continuing thither. *You must give diligence,* saith the Apostle, 2 Pet. 1. 5, &c. and all diligence, (for all will be little enough) *to add to your faith vertue,* (for faith without workes is dead) *to vertue knowledge,* (or else you may doe that which is good, but you shall not doe it well) *to knowledge temperance,* (otherwise your knowledge will puffe you vp rather then edifie you) *to temperance patience,* (for as you must doe, so you shall suffer for your wel-doing) *to patience godliness,* (for you may else giue your bodies to bee burnt in the fire, and it shall profit you nothing) *to godliness brotherly kindness,* (for how can he that loveth not his brother say truly that hee loveth God?) and *to brotherly kindness charity,* or love: (not onely brotherly kindness to them that are of the household of faith, but charity also towards all men, friends and enemies, as Christ stretcht out his armes on the Crosse to both the malefactors,) the first named of these things is faith, the last is love, in the middle are other good workes, the summe of all is char,

that, Gal. 5. 6. *Faith working by love*, if this bee in you, *if these things be in you*, saith the Apostle, *and abound*, they will make you that you shall neither be barren nor vnfruitfull in the knowledge of our Lord Iesus Christ: neither inwardly barren, nor outwardly vnfruitfull. And thus much concerning good workes in generall, for which this Matron in my Text is here commended; she is commended in the next place in particular for her almes deeds, an excellent species and member of those good workes, to which we are enioyned. We haue precept for it, and example for it, and reasons for it, in the holy Scriptures. *Cast thy bread upon the waters*, saith the Preacher, *Eccles. 11. 1.* First hee saith, *cast*, doe not crumme it, doe not doe it lazily as if lothly, but giue it with a cheerefull minde. Secondly, *Cast bread*, what is necessary for the sustenance of them that need; and bread, not a bone, that is for dogges; not a bastinado, thats for rogues; nor *panem lupidosum*, as Seneca speakes, bread full of grauell, such as the hungry soule must needs eate, but it goeth downe heauily, because it is giuen grudgingly. Thirdly, *panem tuum*, thy bread, that which thou hast gotten with a good and an honest conscience, for to rob a Church, and then build a Spittle, or to defraud or oppress by the pound, and then deale a dole by the perry, is but (according to the well knowne prouerbe) to steale away the goose, and sticke downe a feather. And he, saith the sonne of Sirach, *that bringeth an offering of the goods of the poore, is like as one that killeth the sonne before his fathers eyes*, Eccles. 34. 20. And lastly, it is said, *upon the waters*. First, there distributed sayeth there is no more hope of recompence, then of regaining that which is throwne into the Sea. Again, saith God in the mouth of the Prophet Esay c. 48. 7. *Is not this the fast*, first, this is the fast that I haue chosen, to deale thy bread to the hungry, when thou seest the naked to cover him, and that thou hide not thy selfe from thine owne flesh. In which last words a reason is giuen why the rich should not turne away their eyes from the poore in contempt and disdaine, as too commonly they doe, euen because, they all are of the same mold & flesh, and among them elues one anothers members. And lastly the Apostle, 1 Cor. 8. 7. *Therefore* saith he, *as ye abound in every thing in faith & in utterance, &c. see that ye abound in this grace also*, viz. a liberrall contribution to the necessities

efficiency of the power, by the example of *Abraham*, Gen. 12. of *Lot*, Gen. 19. of *Job*, who protested for himselfe, *that hee did not care his mercies alone, but hee soughte life together with him.* Job 31. 17. and by the example of *Zacharie*, Luk. 19. 8. Nor are examples so many, but the benefit is as great. *After many dayes thou shalt finde it.* Eccles. 11. 1. And, *The mercifull man doth good to his owne soul.* Pro. 11. 27. And *Ble that giueth to the poore lendeth to the Lord, and what he hath giuen he will pay him again.* Pro. 19. 17. And, *Blessed is he,* (saith *David*) *that considereth the poore and needy, the Lord shall deliuer him in the time of trouble,* Psal. 41. 1. And lastly, *Charge them that are rich* (saith *S. Paul* to *Timothy*) *that they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate, laying vp in store for themselves, a good foundation against the time to come.* 1 Tim. 6. 18. I speake not this by way of taxe, or as condemning you, I know how the poore in this place are in very good measure provided for: but I speake you see to a great many of this Country, as well as to you of the towne, and all are not alike minded neither among them or you. I pray God there be not amōg both sorts of you (though I know none here) some such as in the world there are too many, who are *humani in belluiis*, or *in homines belluini*, prodigall in their expenses on hawks or horses, or hounds, or worse, & yet close fitted the whilke & squint-eyed when they should look on and succour their poore needy brethren: for them that are as in this case they should be, what I haue spoken tends to their commendation and encouragement, and to the exhortation and stirring vp of others who are not alike well minded, nor alike as others, nor alike as *Dorcas* in my text, of whom out of the words themselves it may be truly affirmed, that euen while she liued, *shee was full of almes which shee did.* She knew that in heauen shee should meet with none that did none be helpe, and therefore shee would helpe them that needed before shee was going thither. I haue no reason to condemn mens leaning to the poore by way of legacy in their last wills, yet ye know there is an old saying, that *his dat qui cito*, that man doth giue double, that giueth seasonably; and on the contrary, he *Heathen* man could say, *scutum gratia deponitur, quantum more effugium*: a good turne that is deferred and put off, doth lose a great deale of that grace and thanks which otherwise it would

would haue, and a suspicion is left in the minds of men, that we
 giue therefore then, because we cannot keep it: *2. non habemus
 parat, quam deus facit Deus*, God more respects the wel-doing of
 a thing, then the deed done: and indeed (Beloued) if nothing
 else did, the hardnesse of these times, hard times for the poore
 certainly, doe euen force vs to open our hands as God hath in-
 abled vs, for their reliefe and succour; O let vs not persecute
 them whom God hath smitten, nor vexe them whom hee hath
 wounded; let not their affliction bee forgotten in the midst of
 our feasting. Plead not that the times are hard for others also, as
 well as for the poore: who will beleue it that shall but thinke
 on this, that scarce was there euer more spent in pride and gal-
 lantry, in ryot and gluttony, in quaffing and carousing, in sports
 and gaming? and what a great deale of good might bee done
 to the poore, if they had what may well bee spared out of the
 costlinesse of our appaill, out of the superfluity of our diet, my
 one of that that is bestowed vpon the Demills for who else but he
 gaineth by what is cast away in ryot and drunkenness, in lusts
 and filchines, in games & sportfulness, in needlesse quarrels and
 contentions? doe not mis-apply my words, I speake in generall
 termes, and to forreiners from abroad, as well as to the inhabi-
 tants of this place; all whom I would haue to examine their
 owne soules, who take exception at what I speake, doe but be-
 tray their owne guiltinesse, and thinke a great deale worse of
 themselves then of me they can. O consider (and so I will con-
 clude this point) that it is *pauis esurientium quoniam in deuoratur*, &c.
 the bread of the hungry which is deuoured in gluttony, the
 drinke of the thirsty that is swilled in in temperately, the gar-
 ments of the naked that men strut in so hauningly (who some
 of them as St. *Ambrose* speakes, *parietes vestiant cura, & pauperes
 nudant vestimento*, doe array their walls with cloth of Arras, of
 silk, of silver, of gold, and leaue bare, if not make bare also the
 backs and armes of the needy) and the money of the poore
 peacable ones which is cast away in malicious sures and contro-
 uersies. Let eury thing be placed in his due place, cause not the
 leane checkes to become linker yet, make not the needy eyes to
 waite long, and bee euen ready to fall out of their sockets with
 waiting; defraud not the poore of their due almes, though it be
 giuen

given vnto them, it is but lent vnto God, and he will repay it, and in due proportion too, as the Apostle speaks, *1 Cor. 9. 6. He that soweth sparingly, shall reape sparingly, and he that soweth bountifully shall reape bountifully* : as of this godly matron in my Text it is said, that she sowed bountifully, *for she was full of good works and almes which she did*. Concerning which words, it is noted, that *fulnesse* here doth commend her good workes and almes, for three good qualities; sincerity, generality, constancy; sincerity in respect of the root and fountaine, generality in respect of the streames and branches, and constancy in respect of the growth and current, her goodnesse proceeded from her heart, did spread it selfe farre and wide, and did continue and last vnto her end.

And now (Beloued) that in the midst of our fulnesse in other kinds, fulnesse of pride, fulnesse of idleness, fulnesse of knowledge, and fulnesse of good words, wee would be full of good workes also as she was: If we do good, is it not grudgingly, or for worldly and temporal respects? where is our fulnesse of sincerity then? Is it not mincingly, and with that great personages limitation, in the booke of the *Kings*, God be mercifull vnto vs in these and these cases? where is our fulnesse of generality then? Or is it not wearisomely and with great fainting? where is our fulnesse of constancy and perseuerance? It is this being full of goodnesse that bringeth glory vnto God, *for herein is my Father glorified*, saith our Sauour Christ, *that you beare much fruit*, Ioh. 15. 8. It bringeth assurance to our consciences of our happy estate here, *for he that abideth in me and I in him*, saith Christ, *the same bringeth forth much fruit*, Ioh. 15. 5. and of the reward of blessednesse laid vp for vs in heauen, therefore saith the Apostle, *Gal. 6. 9. Let vs not be weary in well doing, for in due time we shall reape if we faint not*: if not now while we liue, (and indeed their case is the worst of all of whom it may be said, *they haue their reward*) yet assuredly when death commeth, as it did to this good woman in my text, and is the second generall thing I must speake of concerning her, the death of *Dorcas*, with the immediate forerunner thereof her sicknesse.

And it came to passe in those daies, that she was sicke, and aye.

Now the word that is here read *it came to passe*, is sometimes read

read, it is foreshadowed, both well in diuers respects, the one in respect of God, vnto whose providence all things being subiect, and governed by it, it is said in regard thereof, that things come to passe; and yet to chance or happen in respect of vs vnto whom God thinks not fit to reuelate and open those future events, which hee leauieth to keepe in his owne hands. Whence the point collected is that which you all know, that there is nothing can befall man in this world, be it cloudy weather or cleere, sunshine, or full of stormes, but it is all subiect and subordinated to the wisdom and providence of Almighty God. There be diuer names vsed among men, as fate and destiny, and the like, but heare what St. *Austin* saith, (*de ciuit. Dei. l. 5. c. 1.*) *Qua si propterea quisq. fato tribuit, &c.* If any man attribute the things that come to passe vnto fate or destiny, and say that by it hee toucheth the will and providence of God, *Sententiam tenent, linguae corrigit*, that hee keepe his opinion, but let him alter his phrase of speech; because many when they heare these words, fate, destiny, and the like, are moued to beleue the some thing inferior vnto Gods providence is meant, as the cause or promoter of the things that happens: and the lesson hence arising is in a word this, that in all the changes and chances of this present life, we lay vp our rest vpon Gods providence, and next after our honest and lawfull endeavors refer the successe of all to him: in time of health and prosperity, not lifted vp with pride and presumption; nor murmuring and repining when wee see the hand of God vpon vs, (though we see the hand of men, or the *Danill* there also) in case of crosse and aduersity; but alwaies resolving as old *Ely* did, *1 Sam. 3. 18.* *It is the Lord, let him doe what seemeth him good.* And if it come to passe that wee are sicke, yea sicknesse is the suburbs through which ordinarily wee doe enter into the gates of death; and for this purpose hath God placet in mans body deaths armory, his sort of munition, wherein hang a thousand shields; wherewith the Lieutenant and his Captaine, the messenger and his master, *warlike* and *merry*, sicknesse and death, doe but come and then overcome man. Mans head and heart, and stomacke, and lynes, and light, and lungs, and other parts of his body, what are they, but so many severall cells wherein sicknesse and death haue severall swords to wound

and kill man with when God will haue it so. Nay, man saith *Bernard* is alwaies sicke of one distaste or other, generally of three about other, the one in his beginning and entrance into the world, and that is full of infirmity and vncleannesse: the second in his progresse through the world, and that is full of iniquitie and puerfnesse: the third in his going out of the world, not without paine and perill: and *nasci in corpore mortali agrotare est*, to be born into the world, is to be thrust out into a Spittlehouse. And if we consider almost the whole course of a mans life, how it is spent, we shall finde it composed of nothing else, but infirmities & remedies, maladies and medicines, sickneses and their physick, and the physicke and remedies many times more trouble some then the diseases themselves; whē a man is hungry he is not well till he eat, & labor killeth without rest after it; the comfort of the one to cure the paine of the other, and yet oftentimes eating makes as sicke as hunger did, the rest of the body yeelds no rest to the mind, and the time of quiet proues the most vnquiet time of all. *It came to passe that she was sicke*, What, this godly and charitable matron? yea, and no maruaile at it, the Lord chasteneth whom he loueth, and afflicteth with some kind of crosse or other euery sonne whom he doth receiue, and *qui excipitur è numero flagellatorum, excipitur è numero filiorum*, They that are altogether without correction, are bastards and not sonnes, Heb. 12. 8. But it proues in Gods children, though harsh to flesh and blood, as the clay by our Sauiour Christs power, did to the blinde man, *Ioh. 9.* an excellent meanes to open those eyes which were shut by sinne, and make a man see both Gods power, and his owne weaknesse, which in time of ease and freedome he did not so well discern: for the fruit of wisdom groweth on the tree of trouble; and the schoolehouse of affliction is the schoolehouse of instruction. But if iudgement be executed on the house of God, where shall the wicked and sinners appeare? the one are corrected in the world, that they may not be condemned with the world; and the other let alone oftentimes to spend their daies as oxen in fat pastures, of purpose to be reserved for a more grieuous slaughter. Often, if you will that death shall not be terrible when it comes (though the Philosopher calls it of all terrible things the worst) learne first to

bid the forerunners of death welcome; learne to entertaine, as ye ought sicknesse patiently, the sicknesse of the body; and crosses patiently, the crosses of the minde; and losses patiently, losse of goods, losse of friends, losse of liberty; if God doe so order it, these are *antambulones*, the *prodromi*, the footposts, the messengers, the harbingers of death; bid (I say) these welcome and death shall come well vnto you when it comes, as come it will, perhaps as neere to the heeles of sicknesse, as the words in my text doe come close together, *she was sick, and dyed*. Or if not, as not alwaies, yet are there two wormes, the two daughters of Time, Day and Night, which continually bite and gnaw at the root of the tree; our very life and hart-blood, while we, prodigall of that whereof to bee, couetous is the onely countousnesse that is honest, *viz.* our time, doe so long feed on the honey-combes that hang ouer our heads, desiring to sariate our selues with the pleasures of this life, till this tree of our life bee bitten through by those two wormes, and we fall into that pit whence there is no redemption. *She was sick and dyed*. Yea, this is the ordinary effect of sicknesse, that sooner or later it will end in death; *she was sick and dyed: and man is sick, and dyeth*, saith *Iob*, *c. 14. 10.* but what meanes *Iob* so immediately to the former words *man is sick*, to adioyne those other, *and man dyeth*, why doth he so? Is it to aggravate the miseries to which poore man in this world is subiect? by the whole scope of the text it should seeme it is, and yet how can it be so? *for man is sick and dyeth*, is no more then man hath gone a long and a wearisome pilgrimage, and hath finished his course, or man hath laboured and wearied himselfe al the day long, and is set him downe to rest; or man hath ouer-watched himselfe and is false asleepe: this is *man is sick, and dyeth*: death indeed, the remembrance of death is bitter to the man that is at rest in his possessions, that hath nothing to vex him, but hath prosperity in all things, whose breasts are yet full of milke, and his bones of marrow, who may wash his plants with butter, and whose rocks powre him out riuers of oyle; Oh how would the newes of death make him startle, and his knees smite each other with trembling, as it fared with *Felix* when *Paul* reasoned of the iudgment to come. *Act. 24. 25.* But when a man shal long for death, as a seruant doth

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for the shadow, an hireling for the end of his worke, and a woman in trauell for her deliury: when he would seeke for death if hee knew where, as a man would seeke for treasures, and reioyce if he could finde the graue: whose cheekes are gummy with weeping, and the picture of death sits in his eyes, who neuer eates morsell with pleasure, but is still dying in the bitterness of his soule: to such a man how acceptable would the iudgement of death be, and to dye after sicknesse no degree of misery? Indeed if wee consider death as adioyned to that world of miseries which in this world of misery we are subiect to, then is death a more excellent medicine then all the Art of man can prescribe, to cure all diseases: but if in the cause of it which was sinne, and in the nature of it, euen the dissolution of nature; then doth flesh bid away to death, though it be the ordinance of the Lord ouer all flesh; yea all. The words of *Iob* doe shew the Pedigree of all mankind, *I haue said to corruption, thou art my father, and to the wormes, thou art my mother, and my sister,* *Iob* 17. 14. And if King *David* said personally of himselfe, prophetically of his Lord and ours, *I am a worme and no man*, what man is there that is not a worme also? This we know well enough all of vs, euen so well that the Deuill himselfe cannot make vs beleue the contrary, he dares not say to vs as he did to our first parents, *ye shall not dye*, they had scene none dye before them, wee haue had millions, yet see how easily he makes fooles of vs, hee chokes vs with the same bair as he did them, but with this difference, he gaue them the bait whole and they swallowed it, he giues it vs by peeces, as that we shall not dye yet, not this day, or this weeke, or this moneth, or perhaps not this yeare; and so quickly perswades vs so to liue, as if we were immortall, neuer dreaming either of deaths certaintie, or hells misery, or heauens felicity.

The due consideration of which things, euen of death alone, would serue to humble vs, as it did those Ancients, who made their often casting ashes on their heads, a monument and memoriall of their mortality: it would serue to worke repentance in vs as it did in the *Ninivites*; and that excellent resolution which it did in *Iob*, when hee said, *Naked came I out of my mothers wombe, and naked shall I returne thither: the Lord giueth and*

the Lord draketh away; (living as well as life, and life as well as living) blessed be the name of the Lord for all; Job 1. 21. It would bee available against the lust of the eyes, couetousnesse, for hee might easily be perswaded not to loue the world, that would duely consider how soone hee might leaue the world, and the things of it: against pride of life it would bee available, for what should make him lift vp his heart aboue his brethren, whose head hee may happe to trample vnder his feet that now kneeles before him? O if a man would but thinke on it, how vile Christ became for him, & what himself is in himself, weaknesse in his birth, wickednesse in his life, the subiect of rottennesse in his end: in his comming into the world miserable, in his living in the world sinfull, in his going out of the world the heire of corruption, if not the child of perdition too, this would make to stoope the necke of pride as white as Iuory which must shortly be as the clay in the streets. And lastly, against the lusts of the flesh which though neuer so much doted on, and euen made an Idoll of, must first breed a multitude of wormes, then be deuoured of them; nay, there are three things that wait to share vs and what we haue betweene them, the wormes to haue our flesh, the world to haue our wealth, and the Deuill to haue our soules; and euery of these so well contented with his owne part, that he will not leaue it for both the other: the world will not care for our soules, or for our bodies, so it may haue our goods; the wormes will not care for our goods or for our soules, so they may haue our bodies; and the Deuill will not care for our bodies or for our goods, so he may haue our soules: but let vs therefore care more then we doe, if not for our bodies, (let death make his best of them that he can) yet for our substance and for our soules, to put both our houses in order before wee dye; our outward and our inward house, the one for settling of peace both our owne and theirs whom wee leaue behinde vs, and the other for our soules eternall happinesse; and both these, because it may be said to any of vs *when shalt dye and not liue*, before it can be said *put thine house in order*, that to the houses especially of our hearts may be in order alwaies.

Conclu-
sion.

And thus we haue followed *Dorcas* as farre as my text did lead vs; Is there now euer another *Dorcas* for me to speake of

sure

sure this towne had, and *habuisse decem*, it is a credit to them that they had, for shee was a credit to them while they had her, in a good degree such another *Dorcas*: Concerning whom though I should be silent, and shall be sparing, yet this Church which she duely frequented, those poore whom she continually releued, this towne which she alwayes loued, nay not *Ioppa* onely, and this her dwelling place, but all that knew her by acquaintance, and many other that did not know her but by the eare, will yet say, (and it will be said hereafter perhaps with more feeling then now) that this place hath lost a *Dorcas*, who was, as the name I told you signified in the root of it, cleare-sighted, to be thinke herselfe how she should, and to provide in some measure that she might so lead her life here, that shee might afterwards liue eternally with God, as her good life, and right Christian end doe assure vs that she now doth. Why, is shee dead then? what else meanes our meeting here at this time? what this great concourse of people? in all whose faces a man may easily read the loue and griefe, that brought you hither: and shall I not think you thought her worthy of loue? I am sure you had reason so to doe; you the poore of this place, to whom I cannot say, as *Dauid* to the Daughters of *Israel*, weepe for *Saul* that clothed you in *Scarlet*, but weepe for *Dorcas* who was alwaies ready, and to her end, and at her end, to succour and releue in great measure your wants and necessities; wherein if other women did well, yet shee surmounted them. Yet doe not weepe for her, weepe for your selues, and for your sinnes; serue God in holinesse and godlinesse of liuing; expresse your thanks to God for blessing her and continuing her so long among you, (till shee was aged fourscore yeares and five) for your good, and then doubt not but if ye serue God as ye ought, hee will provide for you as you need: or else feare that God will take away more *Dorcas*es from you (if at least there bee more) and it fare worse with you yet then now it doth. But our *Dorcas* did not dye till she was sicke first, and in her sicknesse, O how did God shew that whom hee loueth, hee loueth to the end, and toward the end expresseth it more abundantly, as he did to her, who, as if shee knew that this sicknesse should be her last, and because she knew that the least thought of worldly things is of force to withdraw

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the mind from necessary meditations, left presently the care of these things to others, whom by her Will many yeares before made, she had trusted with these things; & spent euen al the rest of her time (as I am and you may be informed by those to whose report you can make no scruple to giue credit) in a right Christian preparation for her last end, by an often confession of her trust in God, sorrowfull acknowledgement of her owne wretchednesse, admirable patience in the midst of her paines, earnest desires to be with her Sauour, yet with Christian submission of her will to Gods, to the great comfort of them that came to comfort her, till euen at her last moment, as if shee saw heaven open, and her Sauour ready to receiue her into his armes, shee desired to be heaued vp into the armes of her Sauour, who did not stay long from her, nor would let her stay long from him, but receiued her soule into his heauenly Kingdom, leauing her body to be by vs brought vnto it long home, there to sleepe in its bed of rest, till at the last day it rise againe, and be made partaker of that endlesse happinesse which her soule in the meane while doth alone enioy; and whereto God in his due time bring vs all, for his great mercies sake, and the merits of his Sonne and our Sauour Iesus Christ. To whom, &c.

Her Epitaph.

D Here is the death, saith Dauid, in Gods sight
O F all his Saints: of her among the rest
R Ich in good works, and almes, and day and night,
C Arefull to serue God, loued of the best:
A God in yeares, in goodnesse, mercy, love:
S Hee sickned, died: and now doth liue above.

FINIS

Index

1. The first part of the index is a list of names, arranged alphabetically. The names are: A. B. C. D. E. F. G. H. I. J. K. L. M. N. O. P. Q. R. S. T. U. V. W. X. Y. Z. 2. The second part of the index is a list of names, arranged alphabetically. The names are: A. B. C. D. E. F. G. H. I. J. K. L. M. N. O. P. Q. R. S. T. U. V. W. X. Y. Z. 3. The third part of the index is a list of names, arranged alphabetically. The names are: A. B. C. D. E. F. G. H. I. J. K. L. M. N. O. P. Q. R. S. T. U. V. W. X. Y. Z. 4. The fourth part of the index is a list of names, arranged alphabetically. The names are: A. B. C. D. E. F. G. H. I. J. K. L. M. N. O. P. Q. R. S. T. U. V. W. X. Y. Z. 5. The fifth part of the index is a list of names, arranged alphabetically. The names are: A. B. C. D. E. F. G. H. I. J. K. L. M. N. O. P. Q. R. S. T. U. V. W. X. Y. Z. 6. The sixth part of the index is a list of names, arranged alphabetically. The names are: A. B. C. D. E. F. G. H. I. J. K. L. M. N. O. P. Q. R. S. T. U. V. W. X. Y. Z. 7. The seventh part of the index is a list of names, arranged alphabetically. The names are: A. B. C. D. E. F. G. H. I. J. K. L. M. N. O. P. Q. R. S. T. U. V. W. X. Y. Z. 8. The eighth part of the index is a list of names, arranged alphabetically. The names are: A. B. C. D. E. F. G. H. I. J. K. L. M. N. O. P. Q. R. S. T. U. V. W. X. Y. Z. 9. The ninth part of the index is a list of names, arranged alphabetically. The names are: A. B. C. D. E. F. G. H. I. J. K. L. M. N. O. P. Q. R. S. T. U. V. W. X. Y. Z. 10. The tenth part of the index is a list of names, arranged alphabetically. The names are: A. B. C. D. E. F. G. H. I. J. K. L. M. N. O. P. Q. R. S. T. U. V. W. X. Y. Z.